A

SPEECH

OF A

MEMBER

OF THE

Church of ENGLAND

To those that are of that

Communion in the Present Parliament;

OR, RATHER

Convention concerning Comprehension.

GENTLEMEN,

THo' I am a Lay Person, I hope my Zeal for the Church at this Juncture, will not be thought Improper by any Body that is Solid and Thoughtful. Church Affairs are of the highest and most Universal Importance. As every Man has an Immortal Soul, so every Man is concern'd for the Honour and Stability of that Church which he believes to be Truest. The Doctrines, the Politicks, and the Rituals too of ours dare come to the Test, and those that believe as well of Her as I do, must think it their Duty, not only to keep Her Fences secure from open Violence, but likewise to Watch well against Her undermining; and I hope to find all that are of Her Communion in this House, to have their Hearts in with me upon this matter; and it is but time, since such as the *Bishop of L*—— &c. are striking a Bargain with the *Fanaticks*, and Dr. *Still*—— is apace returning to his *Irenicon*; Men whose Principle is Preferment are strangely Inconstant. We can't forget, that not long before his Suspension, the *Bishop of Lo*—— gave Instructions in his Diocess for their Prosecution; and we wonder that Dr. *Still*—— should not convince Himself as well as Others by his *Unreasonableness of Separation*. But now our *Church* is to be Deplum'd, Her *Liturgy* Altered, Her Ceremonies laid aside in complyance with that Sect, who will never be at Rest, nor let others be at Ease (let her make what Condiscentions she will) till the Church it self is Destroyed. And as they are naturally very Encroaching, so they cannot bear Power when they have got

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got it; but instead of Quieting the Church, they will give Her but a greater Ferment when she has comprehended them. When a former *Rebellion* had put them in the Sadle, they never cast about for *Accommodation*; but We must again let them into Pulpits, that they may Preach down what they Mis-call our *Superstition*, and with Affected Grimaces and a Canting Tone, Seduce the Multitude from the *Orthodox and Primitive Divinity.*

Now Gentlemen we are in good earnest in danger. In King *James*'s days we were set upon by a handful of Men that had hot Heads, and Notions so contrary to ours, as well as contradictory to right Reason and common Sense, that it would have required a great tract of time to have made many *Converts*: but these are an Industrious, and Cooler Generation, and their Arguments have some plausibility, and the Air of their *Ministry* has been of late too taking; so that I can plainly Prophecy, nay, I can see our *Church* sinking, unless we are aware of the effects of *Comprehension*. As much fault as we found with our King, He propos'd to leave our *Worship* entire, and it was a less dangerous Errour to Tolerate Mistakes, than to fall into, or Conform with them our selves in matters of *Religion*. He must have but little value for the Church he is of, that does not own this to a Tittle. We were cheated into the Belief of the *French League*, that the *Prince* of *Wales* was an *Impostor*, and all the other Lyes wherewith the *Faction* blacknedour King; only that they at last might get the upperhand of us, and then destroy our *Church*. But now we are again undeceiv'd: they have not gone about to prove any one of those Reports, and we are confident that they can't: but we plainly see they were rais'd that they might (*contrary to their own Pretences, and our Sense of Things*) Dethrone our *Lawful Prince*, and set up one of their own *Stamp*, Educated a *Calviniſt*, and now at most, a Favourer of such *Mostly* Churchmen as Dr. *Burnet*: And what they drive at in his *Reign*, and what he Designs, is plain to a Demonstration. Nevertheless be of good heart, be *Advocates* of Truth, and *Protectors* of the *Church*: for though I could even wish that all might be under a Preparation for Sufferings; yet I see methinks, that *God*, who has so often appeared for, and delivered us from Darkness and Destruction, choosing out, and making us the *Instruments* of such a *Restauration* as will make *our Rightful King a Nursing Father* (as well from the Dictates of *Interest* as *Gratitude*) *to us*, who never design'd things should have been carried so far, will so Restore us to our Duty, Settle us in Peace and all our Possessions, and once more Bless us with the good things of this World; we first seek the Kingdom of Heaven, by doing our Duty, and leaving the Consequences to his Divine and Over-ruling Providence.

That they should have no more Regard to the *Princes Publick Faith* in his *Declaration*, of *Indulging Papists* themselves that will live quietly, than to make a Law to *Banish them* out of Town (which is the way to provoke Mischief, if they are capable of doing any, and to be sure the *Severest* of all Injuries, in that it deprive so many *Hundred* Families, of the lower sort, *of the means of getting Bread for their poor Families*) is that which makes the whole Undertaking, a *Jest*, seeing we are all at the same time to be *Guarded by Papists*, of almost all other Nations.